

Message Text

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44

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 NEA-09 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02

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R 111200Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9525

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

C O N F I D E N T I A L KHARTOUM 0600

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, ET, SU

SUBJECT: STATUS SUDANESE MEDIATION ERITREAN ISSUE

1. DURING MEETING WITH FONOFF USEC MIRGHANI THIS MORNING, I INQUIRED RE STATUS SUDANESE MEDIATION ERITREAN ISSUE. SAID I UNDERSTOOD ETHIOPIAN DELEGATION MIGHT BE VISITING KHARTOUM SHORTLY. IF TRUE, I WONDERED WITH WHOM DELEGATION WOULD BE MEETING AND ON WHAT BASIS.

2. MIRGHANI REPLIED GOS MEDIATION BE SLOW PROCESS. ONE COULD NOT YET SPEAK OF "NEGOTIATIONS." IT WAS TRUE THAT ETHIOPIAN DELEGATION MIGHT VISIT KHARTOUM BEFORE LONG BUT TEAM WOULD SIMPLY BE COMING TO ASK QUESTIONS OF GOS RE ITS MEDIATION PROPOSAL. ERITREANS HAD SIMILARLY BEEN PROBING. FOR EXAMPLE, THEY HAD ASKED WHY A CEASEFIRE SHOULD PRECEDE NEGOTIATIONS. WHILE NUMBER OF COUNTRIES HAD PUBLICLY SUPPORTED NIMEIRI'S INITIATIVE AND WE NATURALLY FAVORED NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT, I SAID I ASSUMED ANY PUBLIC USG ENDORSEMENT OF NIMEIRI'S INITIATIVE HARDLY LIKELY BE OF ASSISTANCE AT THIS JUNCTURE. MIRGHANI RESPONDED THAT HE FELT THIS RESTRAINT WAS WISE. FACT WAS THAT NO REPEAT NO
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AGRICAN COUNTRY COULD SUPPORT ERITREAN INDEPENDENCE, SINCE

THIS WOULD BE CONTRARY OAU CHARTER AND CREATE UNFORTUNATE PRECEDENT FOR OTHER AFRICAN STATES WITH POTENTIAL SEPARATIST PROBLEMS. UNFORTUNATELY SOME ARAB STATES DID NOT APPRECIATE THIS POSITION AND HAD COME OUT PUBLICLY IN SUPPORT ERITREAN INDEPENDENCE. THIS WAS DISSERVICE TO ARAB CAUSE IN AFRICA, AND GOS WAS TAKING STEPS QUIETLY TO POINT THIS OUT. MIRGHANI CONCLUDED THAT NEXT STAGE WOULD BE FOR BOTH SIDES SEND DELEGATIONS KHARTOUM TO EXPLORE SEPARATELY WITH GOS THE SPECIFICS OF NIMEIRI'S THREE-PART PROPOSAL (KHARTOUM 0392). GOS WAS EXERTING NO REPEAT NO PRESSURE ON THE PARTIES BUT WOULD BE IN POSITION LOBBY FOR CERTAIN VIEWS IN THE CONTEXT OF SUCH PROJECTED EXPLORATORY TALKS.

3. COMMENT: THROUGHOUT DISCUSSION THIS SUBJECT, MIRGHANI STRESSED NEED FOR PATIENCE. HE NOTED THAT GOS HAD INITIALLY HAD SAME RELUCTANCE TO NEGOTIATE WITH SUDANESE SOUTHERNERS AS PMAC WAS NOW EXHIBITING. HOWEVER, HE SEEMED CONFIDENT ETHIOPIANS AND ERITREANS IN DUE COURSE WOULD COME TO SUCH NEGOTIATIONS.
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